1. Railway Goods Transport.

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The total length of our railway lines amounts to 1 778 kilometres. Of this total 1 230 klms. pertain to the broad-gauge lines and 548 klms. to the narrow-gauge lines. Of the newly-constructed lines finished during the last ten years, for goods transport the most important is the Telšiai - Kretinga Railway completed in 1930—1932. The object of this line, which it fulfils, is to provide better connexion between the port of Memel and the hinterland. This new line is 71 klms. in length.

The railway rolling-stock to-day disposes of 4 351 goods waggons. In 1937 1 567 waggons were equipped with more modern ventilation. Moreover, 20 new goods trucks were built; 20 cattle transport waggons and 22 refrigerator waggons acquired, and 67 goods waggons converted into refrigerator waggons.

The following comparative figures show the development of railway goods transport:

	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Total annual quantity, in 1 000 tons	2 079	1 993	2 164	1 599	1 722	1 853	2 003	2 193	2 352
Monthly average, in million ton-klms	28.3	28.0	31.9	22.0	20.6	23.4	24.7	25.8	26.3

The figures of the first row strikingly reflect the contingent development of our economy. After the peak reached in 1931 followed the sudden drop in 1932 caused by the crisis; then the compensation for losses until 1935 and finally a new ascent in 1936 and 1937, far above the level of 1931.

The circumstance that the monthly average reckoned in ton-kilometres in 1937 also still remains below the position of

Goods Transport of the Most Important Railway Stations (in 1 000 tons).

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	1929	1931	1935	1936	1937
Memel	473.1	611.5	795.3	831.6	823.3
Kaunas	419.2	492.3	401.8	452.3	513.8
Obeliai	425.4	611.8	260.8	224.9	213.8
Joniškis	149.7	116.6	152.5	139.9	213.0
Pagėgiai	594.5	435.4	119.8	119.4	218.3
Virbalis	274.5	212.6	45.4	69.5	88.7

The recession of the goods turnover of both Lithuanian-German frontier stations, Pagėgiai and Virbalis, in 1935 and 1936, reflects first of all the shrinkage shown in the previous chapter of our foreign trade communication with Germany. Since the normalization of Lithuanian-German commercial relations a revival tendency in the turnover was observable in 1937. Above all, however, we see in the foregoing table the tremendous advance of transport to and from Memel, which is due to the ever-increasing importance of that port in our economic life. The importance of our new line of communication, Telšiai - Kretinga, which was opened in 1932, has already been pointed out. The building of this line, as also the [651] introduction of the reduced goods transport tariff in traffic to and from the port of Memel, whereby a more favourable differential rate was granted, has to a great extent contributed to the increase of railway goods transport via Memel during recent years.

The decline of goods transport via Obeliai, the Lithuanian-Latvian frontier station, over which formerly goods transit between Germany and Russia developed, is to be ascribed to the suspension of transit from Germany via Lithuania since 1931.

2. Memel Port Traffic.

The importance of the port of Memel for Lithuania's 504 economic life appears from the fact that, according to the data of the Customs Statistics, in 1937 via Memel 75.5% of our export trade and 68.2% of our import trade were conveyed.